

511: A Resource for Safe Winter Driving

According to the latest issue of *Kansas Turnpike News*, Kansas motorists should remain informed about the latest weather-related road conditions and stay alert to road/weather conditions when traveling across the state. Travelers can easily do this by calling **511**, before leaving home or work, from either a wired or wireless phone from anywhere in Kansas, or by calling 1-866-511-KDOT from anywhere in the U.S.

The 511 system provides callers with near real-time, route-specific road conditions, construction detours and travel weather information for the Kansas State Highway System (Interstate, U.S. and Kansas routes) and the Kansas Turnpike.



Kansas Turnpike routes and segments only are reported in the turnpike menu (option #1). Routes such as Interstate 70, that include both turnpike segments and state highway segments, all information for the entire highway is reported in the Kansas Highways menu (option #2). "Some callers have experienced some confusion about this, and we want callers to know how to get the information they need and want," said Barb Blue, 511 Program Manager for Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT).

Kansas Turnpike Authority (KTA) personnel and crews enter road condition information from across the state. With updates every 15 minutes, *Kansas 511* is a resource to help keep travelers informed about changing conditions. During inclement winter weather, motorists are encouraged to stop periodically and call 511 for updated conditions. Information is provided 24 hours daily, and is free from a landline phone. For cellular phone users, the call will count against your plan's minutes, but no roaming fee should be charged.

Kansas 511 also provides similar information for Nebraska, which is the only surrounding state with an active 511 system.

Another resource to obtain weather-related road condition information is through the Internet. On KDOT's Internet site, customers can access a map detailing existing road conditions across the state.

The map is located at <http://511.ksdot.org> or www.kanroad.org and it can also be accessed through KDOT's main Web site www.ksdot.org under *Road Conditions*. From the map page, users are also able to access links that provide more information about 511, such as frequently asked questions, and user information and tips.